

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1–5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) An exhaust gas purifying catalyst-catalysis comprising a noble metal-platinum supported on ~~the~~a metal-oxide particle ~~according to claim 1~~ comprising a core part and a surface layer, wherein:

a molar fraction of cerium and zirconium constituting a ceria-zirconia solid solution in the core part is higher than a molar fraction of the cerium and zirconium constituting a ceria-zirconia solid solution in the surface layer; and

a molar fraction of cerium constituting ceria in the surface layer is higher than a molar fraction of the cerium constituting the ceria in the core part.

7–8. (Canceled)

9. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) A process for producing ~~the~~a metal oxide particle ~~according to claim 1~~, the process comprising:

providing a sol containing at least a population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles and a population of ~~second metal oxide~~ceria colloid particles differing in the isoelectric point with each other,

adjusting the pH of said sol to be closer to the isoelectric point of said population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles than to the isoelectric point of said population of ~~second metal oxide~~ceria colloid particles, thereby aggregating said population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles,

adjusting the pH of said sol ~~to e closer to be closer~~ to the isoelectric point of said population of ~~second metal oxide~~ceria colloid particles than to the isoelectric point of said population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles, thereby aggregating said

population of ~~second metal oxide~~ ceria colloid particles onto said population of ceria-zirconia solid colloid particles aggregated, and

drying and firing the obtained aggregate;

wherein:

the metal oxide particle comprises a core part and a surface layer;

a molar fraction of cerium and zirconium constituting a ceria-zirconia solid solution in the core part is higher than a molar fraction of the cerium and zirconium constituting a ceria-zirconia solid solution in the surface layer; and

a molar fraction of cerium constituting ceria in the surface layer is higher than a molar fraction of the cerium constituting the ceria in the core part.

10. (New) The exhaust gas catalyst according to claim 6, wherein said core part and said surface layer each comprises a plurality of primary particles.

11. (New) The exhaust gas catalyst according to claim 6, wherein said surface layer further comprises an oxide of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of alkaline earth metals and rare earths.

12. (Withdrawn-New) The process according to claim 9, wherein a difference between the isoelectric points of said population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles and said population of ceria colloid particles is 3 or more.

13. (Withdrawn-New) The process according to claim 9, wherein:

the pH of said sol is changed to pass through the isoelectric point of said population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles to aggregate said population of ceria-zirconia solid solution colloid particles; and

the pH of said sol is changed to pass through the isoelectric point of said population of ceria colloid particles to aggregate said population of ceria colloid particles.

14. (Withdrawn-New) A process for producing an exhaust gas purifying catalyst, the method comprising:

producing metal oxide particles according to the process of claim 9; and
loading platinum on said metal oxide particles.